

ENVOY

Summer 2021



Chepstow Methodist Church

Albion Square, Chepstow

www.chepstowmethodist.org.uk

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Midlife Crisis?

Definitely not a mid-life crisis!

As you have probably seen, I have signed up for a ‘Spartan Race’. It’s a 10 km run with various obstacles along the way – rope climbs, commando crawls, fire leap and sand bag carries to name a few. Entrance was a gift from a younger and fitter friend who wondered if I needed a challenge, especially this year. You see this year I turn 50 and maybe a fitness challenge is a way to cling onto some residual notions of youth, or possibly its just part of the denial process!

It is certainly a privilege to be involved with Partners across the Miles. Pastor Paul and his team do an amazing and inspiring job amongst some of the poorest of people. Key to the project is that the local people on the ground make all the decisions in terms of priorities and they have been clear that the new classroom is vital for their work. Education really is the best hope for the children supported by the project.

So whilst I may be trying to kid myself that I’m not ageing please do consider sponsoring me, every penny makes a huge difference.

Thank you

Rev Andrew Webster

This is now a virtual event - please see update on page 16



Greetings from Traidcraft

Spring is in the air with the lovely tree blossom and daffodils everywhere; hope has returned. I have the Spring catalogue which I can deliver to you and I am happy to deliver orders if you telephone me. Please do continue to support Traidcraft as I am always saying: every purchase makes a difference and keeps my stock in date!

This year the U.K. Government has chosen Traidcraft Exchange to receive UKaid so our donations will be doubled. I send all the profit from our stall to Traidcraft Exchange who are supporting people like Monira in Bangladesh (and others like her) cope with the climate crisis. Together, they are taking a stand against climate change - by planting crops that can grow in extreme weather, protecting the forests and investing in climate-smart technology. With our help they can regenerate their land and protect the earth for generations come - and earn more for the hard work they do every day.

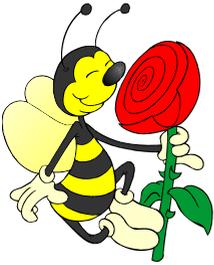
This is what Monira says: “All my life I grew up seeing six seasons in my country. But now the hot season is so long, it is burning all the time. Winter comes for a very short time and too late, so we cannot grow vegetables like before. There are many frequent cyclones. We are already very poor, and this climate change is making our days miserable. This project is

changing our lives and making us aware of what to do about climate change. We are trying to plant trees. We are trying to build our houses stronger and in a higher place. Together when **we stand side by side, we are able to deal with many problems”**.

By working with communities to ensure that they have new knowledge and skills, Traidcraft Exchange can help people like Monira to reduce the impact of climate change meaning they can protect the earth - so they can invest in a brighter, greener future for generations to come.

Showers of Blessings,

Cynthia Giles



Gardening with Lesley

I sit here at the computer and try to think about a new topic for my Envoy gardening article. I am literally “lost for words” - a first when it comes to gardening! I have been writing these articles for longer than I can remember. Firstly with Mair, followed by Terry and Beryl. Currently with Justine who is looking for someone to take over the role of editor. Forgive me if I have left someone out. Thinking up topics is always difficult, and it has been suggested that I just recycle the old ones.

Some of the articles have looked at plants to grow in the garden. Roses are some of my favourite plants and I have often recommended my spiritual three – Grace, Compassion and Peace. I remember meeting a client in Rumbletums (now the Beacon) who mentioned they had planted Compassion in their garden and what a lovely climbing rose it was.

Another series was written at the time of the anniversary of 100 years of the First World War and were based on aspects of the history of those times and remembrance. I included some information about one of my grandparents. A member of the congregation told me how this brought back memories of her family and the times they went through during the war.

People have also featured in the articles as I wrote a series about visits to local gardens belonging to friends and church family. So many memories there. People and their gardens are as important as plants. There is a special relationship between a gardener and their garden. The plants they choose, the memories they hold for them. Especially as so often the plants themselves are memories. I still look at a plant of Iris Ungulicaris given to me by Margaret Penny. I also have a **lovely paeony given to me by Kathy from Pam Sloman's garden.** People who are no longer with us, but whose very special memories live on in in our hearts as well as the garden.

In current times many articles featured aspects of changes in gardening to respond to climate change. The issues of bio-diversity and sustainability. How we garden and use our outside spaces can make a difference to climate change. Drastically reducing our dependence on chemicals. Having many wilder spaces for wild animals and insects. Even tolerating dandelions - as they are a very important source of nectar for insects early in the season!

A common thread that goes through many of these articles is how gardens and gardening can be a healing process. A book I **have been reading called "The Well Gardened Mind" by Sue Stuart-Smith** a prominent psychiatrist looks at how gardening does have a positive effect on mental health. She uses science, insight and anecdote to look at the restorative powers of nature. She writes about her own experience of gardening at times of great stress. She writes;

“All the time, in all sorts of ways, we are investing in an unknown future, but when events conspire and life feels out of control, it is hard to dare to dream. The garden is a safe place to begin and it gives you structure and discipline too, for it is not about unboundaried possibilities. There is no negotiating with the march of the seasons or the pace of the natural growth force. You cannot slow them down or speed them up. You have to submit to the rhythm of garden time and you have to work **within that frame.**”

I started out with a blank page, not knowing what to write, but these words bring me right back to one of God’s great promises:

“As long as the earth endures, Seedtime and harvest,
Cold and heat, Summer and winter,
Day and night will never cease.” Genesis 8:22.

Lesley Kelly



Congratulations to Ruth and Alex Taylor on the birth of their son William born on Mothering Sunday 14th March, a grandson for Janet and Steve Ellard.

Congratulations to Bronwen and Michael Bale who celebrated 65 years of marriage on 14th April.

Congratulation to Margaret and Alan Bishop who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary (50 years) on May 15th.



The Franchise Affair by Josephine Tey

‘Which one do you like?’

Claire was pointing at a picture of two densely eye-browed young men. Collectively they were known as Wham! Their exclamation mark, not mine. Julie, on my right, was becoming impatient for my answer. No idea, didn’t like either of them, wasn’t entirely sure which was which. And I thought even less of their ‘music’. Actually, I didn’t think much of anyone’s music. So far, the soundtrack of my life ran from The Sweet’s suitably juvenile ‘Little Willy,’ (which still transports me back to the reception class playground) via Abba and Blondie, to the Two-tone bands. Music could be fun, serious, both; it communicated things about love, justice and the awfulness of being a teenager; it expressed everything I wasn’t articulate enough to express for myself. But now something had gone wrong. Instruments had been replaced by synthesisers, pleasure by posing, and I didn’t get it. Old and past it at fifteen. Julie sighed theatrically.

‘Umm ... that one?’ I said wildly, half afraid it was all a trick and I was looking at two photos of the same person.

‘Told you!’ Claire said, triumphant, grinning past me at Julie.

I told my friend Mark about the Wham! thing, that I just didn’t get it. He sympathised. He’d never got it either. But then he’d never wanted to - and at twenty-five he was old enough to be

proud of his fogeyness.

‘Try Radio 4,’ he suggested.

‘Radio 4?’ I was pretty sure that the people on Radio 4 sounded ‘posh’ and in my family posh (pronounced poesh) was about the worst thing a person could be. A person was posh if he or she had anything we didn’t - a fridge, a record player, walls without mould, good manners.

‘Start with Weekending – it’s funny’.

So, I listened, hiding under the bedclothes so no-one would know. And it was - funny. Gradually I found myself listening to more and more, and not just comedy - plays, stories, sport, news, Gardener’s Question Time. I just liked listening to people talking about all sorts of things in an interesting way. I went from ‘Picture This’ to the pictures are better on the radio in a matter of months.

So, what does that have to do with a book review? Well, for me, reading has always been an escape, a window into other worlds, just as the radio was.

One of the delights of a trip back to the Isle of Wight is a trip to Mrs Middleton’s Shop, a second-hand bookshop with a good stock of ‘golden age’ crime fiction. When I was there last year, Agatha Christie stocks were low, but they suggested *The Franchise Affair* by Josephine Tey. One of my 1980s Radio 4 memories was of the dramatization of *The Franchise Affair*. I

say memory, but standing in that shop I realised I couldn't remember anything of the story - only how it made me feel: like something dark was closing in, over and around me. So, I bought the book and read it on the beach while my dog rolled in the sand next to me.

First published in 1948, it's later than the 'golden age', but it has the right ingredients: the innocent young girl; the sinister older woman; the peculiar spinster and an amateur sleuth (a local solicitor more used to conveyancing than crime). The sleepy pace of life, love of scandal and mistrust of outsiders will be familiar to anyone who's lived in a village – as I did in the 1980s.

The Franchise is a house almost hidden behind a high wall that no-one can see over whether passing on foot or by car. So, when fifteen-year-old Betty Kane says that she was kidnapped by Mrs and Miss Sharpe and describes details of the grounds of **the house she must be speaking the truth. Mustn't she? Things** look pretty dark for the Sharpes and the house that had once given them freedom becomes a prison.

I am so glad that I read this book. Although the impression left by the adaption was entirely reasonable, when I think of the story now I think how right it is that **'the truth can set you free'**.

Justine Andrews

Editor Needed

I moved to Usk last Summer and I have been very grateful for the Zoom services and Bible study meetings that have allowed me to remain part of the church in Chepstow over the past year. I am willing to continue as editor of Envoy for as long as the Zoom services continue, but a new editor will be needed if the magazine is to continue longer term.

If you are interested, please get in touch with me (Justine Andrews) at

chepstowenvoy@yahoo.com

Hope in Christ – Zambia – Grade 8 Classroom

Rev Andrew Spartan Challenge – 20th June 2021

Since returning from our first visit to Zambia in 2015 we have developed a **“Partnership Across the Miles”** between Hope in Christ Ministry, Zambia, our Church in Chepstow & other friends in the USA & UK. Hope in Christ was the vision of Pastor Paul & Mary Swala and started in 2008 with the vision of helping & educating orphaned & needy children. Hope in Christ school is sited on the edge of the **“Chipata Shanty Compound”** in Lusaka and currently provides primary education to Grade 7 for 156 children.

The ongoing vision is to accommodate Grade 8 children for their first year of secondary education onsite at Hope in Christ school. To this end a new classroom has been planned and needs to be built. Rev Andrew Webster’s Spartan 10 km. challenge on 20th June 2021 aims to raise funds for this project; every penny raised will be sent by Chepstow Methodist Church direct to Hope in Christ and be used for this purpose. By the time

The Hope in Christ School motto is “The distance between success & failure is action.”Your action in supporting this project will help educate children in one of the poorest areas of the world where “Education is Life.”

The target to build the new Grade 8 Classroom at Hope in Christ School is £4,000. By the time you receive your copy of Envoy the event may be close or may have taken place. However if you would still like to sponsor Rev Andrew in his **“Spartan Challenge”** raising funds for this project you can still

do so online using your credit / debit card from anywhere in the world at

<https://www.give.net/HopeinChrist2021>

Alternatively in the UK you can make a cheque payable to **“Chepstow Methodist Church”** (please write **“Zambia Grade 8 Project”** on the back of the cheque) and send it to CMC Finance Officers, Richard & Katharine Stevenson, Kingsmark House, Kingsmark Lane, Chepstow, NP16 5LZ. If you prefer to make a gift by bank electronic transfer, please contact Richard rs240uk@yahoo.co.uk or 01291 629640. All donations can be Gift Aided if you are a UK tax payer.

If your heart feels touched to support the work at Hope in Christ School in Zambia you may like to consider helping with a regular gift by standing order; please contact Vera & Brian for more information. Regular donations are sent out to Zambia quarterly and enable the day to day running of the School providing daily meals for the children, education resources and wages for qualified teachers.

Vera & Brian Lloyd

For Partners Across the Miles

Spartan Fundraiser event for the Hope in Christ, Grade 8 Classroom Project on 20th June.

UPDATE

Due to ongoing Covid restrictions concerning large, amateur sporting events, the organisers of the Spartan Event have made a postponement until October.

However there will be a virtual event on the original date of June 20th which Andrew intends to do along with a friend John his training partner. This will still include a 10 km run and 25 obstacles including; wall climb, fence jump, commando crawl, 20 kg sandbag carry, burpees, hill run, beam balance and dead weight carry. We hope this sounds sufficiently challenging for people to still want to sponsor Andrew who is still definitely having a mid-life crisis!

To date £2,446 has been raised, many, many thanks to those who have already given their support. Please pray for Andrew & John as they train for the event;

Vera & Brian Lloyd

Worship in our Church:

Hello Church Family! I'm sure many of you are as excited to get back into our church building as I am, even if there is just a hint of uncertainty lingering! As I'm sure most of you are aware, we will return to our building for worship on the 6th June. This will look very much as it did in that interim period between lockdowns previously. This means that it will be a 'hybrid' service (which means it will be made available live on Zoom, then a recording later posted on YouTube). ('Zoom' details are opposite) This also means that, should you wish to worship in the church building, you must 'book in' with Debbie Cairns, as currently, we are still limited to 30 people indoors. It is possible that, by the 13th of June, we will be able to have up to 50 indoors. Also, like previous occasions, in order to worship in the church building, one must still wear a mask, follow the one-way system, and maintain social distancing as much as possible. It is certainly my hope that, in the near future, we'll be able to worship again with a full house, with no masks or other restrictions - something that is almost difficult to imagine after all this time! In the meantime, though, we press on and continue to worship our God through all of life's ups, downs, twists, and turns. Blessings,

Rachel



Blueberry Muffins - makes 6

50g 1 1/2oz sunflower oil

2 tablespoons natural yogurt

100g 3 1/2oz caster sugar

1 egg

150g 5 1/2oz SR Flour (gluten free works well)

150g 5oz fresh blueberries

Sugar cubes (optional)

Pre heat oven 190°C, Fan 170°C, gas 5

Put 6 muffin cases into muffin tray

Mix the oil, yogurt, sugar and egg in a large bowl and beat well together

Sift the flour into the mixture and combine, then stir in the blueberries, retaining 12 to top the muffins

Divide the mixture between the muffin cases. Top with the reserved blueberries and a sprinkle of crushed sugar cubes.

Bake for 25 minutes.

I've chosen this recipe to share as it's become a bit of a 'go to' recipe for us when a little cake is a good idea but we don't want too much leftover. (You can of course substitute raspberries for blueberries and play with the recipe).

Choosing the appropriate recipe to meet the occasion is easier if you have a broad repertoire to draw on and experience and practice add to your confidence in making a choice.

Discipleship has parallels when it comes to scripture, prayers and daily walking the walk.

In the same way we enjoy using and sharing recipes it's great to share how scripture (written so long ago) can still be a vital guide to help us navigate our way through the challenges life presents us with.

It will be interesting when we can all meet up again to share how we've all coped with the enforced change made to our 'normal' routines - and how the Lord has inspired us to make the best of it.

In praying and thinking about the unusual events of this last year and all the extraordinary restrictions imposed I've been drawn back to Ecclesiastes with the statement Ch. 1 v9 "that there is nothing new under sun..... " and to Ephesians 6:12 "for we wrestle not against flesh & blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"

The battle rages through the ages but Jesus has already gained the victory for us. I'm looking forward to when we can worship together again, hopefully not too far off.

Hills

John Wesley

This is the third instalment of short articles on the protestant dissenters and reformers whose names appear on the meeting room doors within our church. The last two issues of Envoy have highlighted John Wycliffe and John Bunyan. This issue looks at John and Charles Wesley. The Wesley room is the main meeting room upstairs.

John Wesley (1703 – 1791) was the fifteenth child and second son of the Reverend Samuel Wesley, Anglican Rector of Epworth in Lincolnshire, and his wife, Susannah. The rectory at Epworth is a thriving museum to Methodism. Susannah home-schooled the children, both girls and boys equally and gave each child plenty of individual attention.

John was educated in London and then at Oxford University. He was elected Fellow at Lincoln College, Oxford, and ordained as an Anglican priest in 1728. He joined friends in the **‘Holy Club’** and they were nicknamed **‘Methodists’** due to their methodical way of living, their discipline and piety.

He and his younger brother, Charles, went on a mission to **America but it wasn’t a success. John was concerned about not** being sure that his salvation through faith was real. He was impressed by the quiet faith of a group of Moravian travellers while on the voyage.

Back in England in May 1738 both Charles and John had

spiritual conversion experiences within three days of each other, **John wrote that he felt his heart ‘strangely warmed’** following a meeting. Charles became a prolific hymn writer **and after his conversion he wrote the hymn, ‘And Can It Be?’** George Whitefield, a fellow Methodist preacher, invited John to come to Bristol to start open-air preaching. There John built **the ‘New Room’ which was used for teaching, preaching and as lodgings for itinerant preachers.**

John travelled the length and breadth of the country on horseback, preaching to communities in the open air. He reached more ordinary people this way, rather than preaching in a church. He could see the lives people led and the challenges they faced. He preached thousands of sermons and many are published.

An important component of the new Methodist movement was **the setting up of societies and class meetings in people’s homes.** These class meetings were for bible study and prayer and the members were accountable to class leaders. John also approved Lay Preachers to take services.

Despite John Wesley's claim 'I live and die a member of the Church of England', by the time of his death the Methodist movement had grown apart from the national church. After many splits and unions the Methodist Church united in 1932 to become the church we know today.

Pam Horne



THE SALT PATH by Raynor Winn

During the “Fire Break” the second Welsh Lockdown, I was loaned a book written by Raynor Winn titled ‘The Salt Path’. Ray and her husband Moth married for 32 years lost their home and business in a bad investment deal, and were left homeless and broke. Moth was also diagnosed with CBD - Corticobasal Degeneration (a rare degenerative brain disease). With nothing left and an uncertain future they decided to walk the 630-mile South West Coastal Path, from Somerset to Dorset, via Devon and Cornwall. Having walked parts of this Coastal Path with our daughter and son in law, it was a must read for me.

Many years ago when I read the novel by Joanne Harris ‘**Chocolat**’ I ate and drank copious amounts of Hot Chocolate, Ray and Moth eat copious amounts of Pot Noodles (cheap and easy food to prepare) during their trek. Never having eaten a Pot Noodle was I tempted? **NO WAY!!** but It did bring back some good memories and the desire to put on my walking boots and go for a walk even if it was only through the local country lanes. An excellent read.

Kathy Griffin

The Autumn ENVOY will be available at the beginning of September 2021

Please send articles to: chepstowenvoy@yahoo.com or 19A Mill Street, Usk NP15 1AN by 31st January 2021

NB: ARTICLES RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE CANNOT BE ACCEPTED

Opinions expressed in this magazine may not necessarily reflect the views of the Editors or the Church leaders.



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